

Senator Hartley, Representative Meskers, members of the commerce Committee, greetings. I am former State Representative Lew Wallace, Former Board Chair of Connecticut Humanities and current Board Chair of the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut. On behalf of the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut, I write in support of HB 06692, An Act Authorizing Certain Arts, Culture, and Tourism Grants.

The legislature, led by your committee, has come to recognize the importance of arts and culture organizations to the state and support us through funding. Arts and culture feed into tourism, collectively responsible for over 13% of state GDP. When you financially support arts, culture, and tourism, you are creating jobs. At the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut, we connect the business and arts communities to help grow the economy.

Your support of the Funding Roadmap will help us to continue to do so. We leveraged the dollars allocated to us last through the CT Cultural Fund Operating Support Fund to add staff to advance our development work. We are using those dollars to create a stronger foundation for the Cultural Alliance by garnering private donations, private sponsorships and engaging in partnerships to enable us to better fulfill our mission of creating jobs. Your support of the Funding Roadmap will enable us to support the over 100 arts and culture organizations in our 10-town region. On behalf of the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut, our members, and our constituent organizations. we ask you to please support the Funding Roadmap.